MISHNAH. WORKMEN MAY RECITE [THE SHEMA'] ON THE TOP OF A TREE OR THE TOP OF A SCAFFOLDING, A THING THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED TO DO IN THE CASE OF THE TEFILLAH. A BRIDEGROOM IS EXEMPT FROM THE RECITAL OF THE SHEMA' FROM THE FIRST NIGHT UNTIL THE END OF THE SABBATH, IF HE HAS NOT CONSUMMATED THE MARRIAGE.[8] IT HAPPENED WITH R. GAMALIEL THAT WHEN HE MARRIED HE RECITED THE SHEMA ON THE FIRST NIGHT: SO HIS DISCIPLES SAID TO HIM: OUR MASTER, YOU HAVE TAUGHT US THAT A BRIDEGROOM IS EXEMPT FROM THE RECITAL OF THE SHEMA'. HE REPLIED TO THEM: I WILL NOT LISTEN TO YOU TO REMOVE FROM MYSELF THE KINGSHIP OF HEAVEN EVEN FOR A MOMENT.

GEMARA. Our Rabbis taught: Workmen may recite [the Shema'] on the top of a tree or on the top of a scaffolding, and they may say the tefillah, on the top of an olive tree and the top of a fig tree,[9] but from all other trees they must come down to the ground before saying the tefillah, and the employer must in any case come down before saying the tefillah,[10] the reason in all cases being that their mind is not clear.[11] R. Mari the son of the daughter of Samuel[12] pointed out to Rab a contradiction. We have learnt, he said: WORKMEN MAY RECITE [THE SHEMA'] ON THE TOP OF A TREE OR THE TOP OF A SCAFFOLDING which would show that the recital does not require kawanah.[13] Contrast with this: When one recites the Shema', it is incumbent that he should concentrate his attention[14] on it, since it says, 'Hear, O Israel', and in another place it says, Pay attention and hear, O Israel,[15] showing that just as in the latter 'hearing' must be accompanied by attention, so here it must be accompanied by attention. He gave no reply. Then he said to him: Have you heard any statement on this point? — He replied: Thus said R. Shesheth: This is the case only if they stop from their work to recite. But it has been taught: Beth Hillel say that they may go on with their work while reciting? — There is no contradiction. The former statement refers to the first section, the latter to the second section [of the Shema'].

Our Rabbis taught: Labourers working for an employer recite the Shema' and say blessings before it and after it and eat their crust and say blessings before it and after it, and say the tefillah of eighteen benedictions, but they do not go down before the ark[16] nor do they raise their hands [to give the priestly benediction].[17] But it has been taught: [They say] a resume of the eighteen benedictions?[18] — Said R. Shesheth: There is no contradiction: one statement gives the view of R. Gamaliel, the other of R. Joshua.[19] But if R. Joshua is the authority, why does it say 'labourers' ? The same applies to anyone! — In fact, both statements represent the view of R. Gamaliel, and still there is no contradiction: one refers to [labourers] working for a wage, and the other to [those] working for their keep;[20] and so it has been taught: Labourers working for an employer recite the Shema' and say the tefillah and eat their crust without saying a blessing before it, but they say two blessings after it, namely, [he says] the first blessing[21] right through[22] and the second blessing he begins with the blessing for the land, including 'who buildest Jerusalem' in the blessing[23] for the land. When does this hold good? For those who work for a wage. But those who work for their keep or who eat in the company of the employer say the grace right through.[21]

A BRIDEGROOM IS EXEMPT FROM RECITING THE SHEMA'.[24] Our Rabbis taught: 'When thou sittest in thy house': this excludes one engaged in the performance of a religious duty. 'And when thou walkest by the way': this excludes a bridegroom. Hence they deduced the rule that one who marries a virgin is exempt, while one who marries a widow is not exempt. How is this derived? — R. Papa said: [The sitting in the house] is compared to the way: just as the way is optional, so here it must be optional. But are we not dealing [in the words 'walkest by the way'] with one who goes to perform a religious duty, and even so the All-Merciful said that he should recite? — If that were so, the text should say, 'in going'. What is meant by 'in thy going'? This teaches that it is in thy going that thou art under obligation, and in the going for a religious duty thou art exempt.